

AMENDMENTS TO THE CLAIMS

The following **Listing of Claims** will replace all prior versions and listings of claims in the application.

Listing of Claims

Claim 1 (canceled)

Claim 2 (previously presented): An applicator head as in claim 32, wherein the wells are regularly arranged.

Claim 3 (previously presented): An applicator head as in claim 2, wherein the wells are distributed over the entire applicator plate.

Claim 4 (previously presented): An applicator head as in claim 32, further comprising grooves formed in the first side of the applicator plate.

Claim 5 (previously presented): An applicator head as in claim 3, wherein the wells are arranged in columns.

Claim 6 (previously presented): An applicator head as in claim 32, further comprising:

a carrier plate coupled to the second side of the applicator plate, wherein the combination of the carrier plate and the applicator plate together form an applicator pad; and

a mounting frame releasably connected to the applicator pad.

Claim 7 (canceled)

Claim 8 (previously presented): For an applicator head for a device having an air suction source for applying labels to objects, comprising:

an applicator surface for connection to said air suction source and having spaced perforatable weak locations which can be selectively perforated to provide holes in a desired configuration;

an applicator pad coupled to the applicator surface; and

a mounting frame releasably connected to the applicator pad;

wherein the mounting frame includes two C-shaped guide rails that extend in parallel relationship and into which the applicator pad can be reversibly inserted.

Claim 9 (previously presented): For an applicator head for a device having an air suction source for applying labels to objects, comprising:

an applicator surface for connection to said air suction source and having spaced perforatable weak locations which can be selectively perforated to provide holes in a desired configuration;

an applicator pad coupled to the applicator surface;

a mounting frame releasably connected to the applicator pad; and

an abutment means positioned to hold the applicator pad in place relative to the mounting frame.

Claim 10 (previously presented): An applicator head for an applicator device as in claim 6, wherein the applicator pad is releasably lockable to the mounting frame of a locking device.

Claim 11 (previously presented): An applicator head as in claim 10, wherein the locking device comprises a spring-loaded ball.

Claim 12 (currently amended): An applicator head as ~~in~~in claim 10, wherein an abutment means is formed by the locking device.

Claim 13 (canceled)

Claim 14 (previously presented): An applicator head as in claim 6, wherein the applicator plate and the carrier plate are non-releasably connected together.

Claim 15 (canceled)

Claim 16 (currently amended): An applicator head as in claim ~~432~~, wherein the perforatable thin walls of material are perforatable by a tool having a handle, said tool puncturing through the thin walls of material.

Claim 17 (previously presented): An applicator head as in claim 6, wherein the carrier plate is provided with a coupling for releasable attachment with the suction air source.

Claim 18 (previously presented): An applicator head as in claim 6, wherein the applicator plate is comprised of a deformable material.

Claim 19 (previously presented): An applicator head as in claim 32, wherein the wells are arranged in a raster grid configuration.

Claim 20 (previously presented): An applicator head as in claim 32, wherein the wells are arranged in rows and columns.

Claims 21 and 22 (canceled)

Claim 23 (previously presented): An applicator head as in claim 6, wherein the carrier plate and the applicator plate define at least one hollow space between them.

Claim 24 (previously presented): An applicator head as in claim 6, wherein the applicator plate and the carrier plate are glued together.

Claim 25 (previously presented): An applicator head for a device having an air suction source for applying individual flat material elements to objects, the applicator head comprising:

- an applicator surface connected to said air suction source and having at least two perforatable, weak locations being recesses having a bottom which can be perforated by a suitable tool;

- an applicator pad coupled to the applicator surface;

- a mounting frame releasably connected to the applicator pad;

- the applicator pad is formed from a carrier plate and an applicator plate;

and

a second surface parallel to the applicator surface, the second surface having at least two further weak locations which are aligned with the weak locations at the applicator surface,

wherein the further weak locations are separated from the weak locations by a thin material skin.

Claim 26 (previously presented): An applicator head as in claim 18, wherein the deformable material is plastic.

Claims 27-31 (canceled)

Claim 32 (previously presented): An applicator head for a device having an air suction source for applying labels to objects, said applicator head comprising:

a unitary applicator plate having a first side adapted for facing a label to be applied to an object, a second side adapted for operative fluid communication with the air suction source, and a thickness separating the first and second sides from one another; and,

a plurality of wells formed in the applicator plate, each well having opposing first and second ends, said first end being an open end arranged at one of the first or second sides of the applicator plate and the second end being a closed end spaced apart from the first end such that a depth of the well is less than the thickness of the applicator plate;

wherein each closed end comprises a selectively perforatable thin wall of material integral with the applicator plate, such that when perforated, fluid communication is established between the first and second sides of the applicator plate through the well having the perforated wall, and when unperforated, the wall of material obstructs fluid communication between the first and second sides of the applicator plate through the well having the unperforated wall.

Claim 33 (currently amended): An applicator head for a device having an air suction source for applying labels to objects~~as in claim 32~~, said applicator head comprising:

a unitary applicator plate having a first side adapted for facing a label to be applied to an object, a second side adapted for operative fluid communication with the air suction source, and a thickness separating the first and second sides from one another; and,

a plurality of wells formed in the applicator plate, each well having opposing first and second ends, said first end being an open end arranged at one of the first or second sides of the applicator plate and the second end being a closed end spaced apart from the first end such that a depth of the well is less than the thickness of the applicator plate;

wherein each closed end comprises a selectively perforatable thin wall of material integral with the applicator plate, such that when perforated, fluid communication is established between the first and second sides of the applicator plate through the well having the perforated wall, and when unperforated, the wall of material obstructs fluid communication between the first and second sides of the applicator plate through the well having the unperforated wall; and,

wherein the plurality of wells includes a first well having its open end arranged on the first side of the applicator plate and a second well having its open end arranged on the second side of the applicator plate, said first and second wells sharing a common selectively perforatable thin wall of material at their respective closed ends.

Claim 34 (currently ammended): An applicator as in claim 33, wherein the first ~~an~~ and second wells are essentially coaxial with one another.

Claim 35 (previously presented): An applicator head as in claim 32, wherein when the thin wall of material is perforated at least a majority portion thereof is removed from obstructing fluid communication through the well.

Claim 36 (new): An applicator as in claim 32, wherein at least one of the plurality of wells has a closed end in which the thin wall of material remains unperforated.

Claim 37 (new): An applicator as in claim 36, wherein the thin wall of material comprising the second end of at least one of the plurality of wells is perforated.

Claim 38 (new): A method for controlling air flow through an applicator plate, said method comprising:

providing a unitary applicator plate having a first side adapted for facing a flat element to be applied to an object, a second side adapted for operative fluid communication with an air suction source, and a thickness separating the first and second sides from one another;

forming a plurality of wells in the applicator plate, each well having opposing first and second ends, said first end being an open end arranged at one of the first or second sides of the applicator plate and the second end being a closed end spaced apart from the first end such that a depth of the well is less than the thickness of the applicator plate, wherein each closed end comprises a perforatable thin wall of material integral with the applicator plate; and,

selectively perforating at least one of the thin walls of material to establish fluid communication between the first and second sides of the applicator plate through the well having the perforated wall.

Claim 39 (new): The method of claim 38, further comprising:

retaining at least one of the thin walls of material unperforated such that the unperforated thin wall of material obstructs fluid communication between the first and second sides of the applicator plate through the well having the unperforated wall.